



Montessori: A Step-by-Step Guide to Applying Montessori to Increase Eating and Dressing Participation



Produced and Written By:
Elissa McGarvey and Lei Tan
MSc. Occupational Therapy Candidates 2013
McMaster University
elissamcgarvey@gmail.com | leictan@gmail.com

Acknowledgements

We would like to acknowledge the assistance of the following individuals for their contributions to this guidebook:

- ❖ Judy O'Neill for educating us on Montessori and supporting our learning. Thank you for all your guidance and enthusiasm. It is because of you that we continue to believe in the value of using Montessori to enhance an individual's life.
- ❖ Bev Little, the staff and residents at Grandview Lodge for being our main resource in developing the information in our guidebook. Their support, patience and open-mindedness to our suggestions have truly been motivating. We would like to thank Grandview residents and staff for allowing us to use them as case examples and to take their pictures to enhance the quality of our information.
- ❖ Gail Elliot, a pioneer of Montessori for individuals with dementia for inspiring us to pursue this endeavor and to continue working towards promoting the independence of older adults.
- ❖ Colleen McGrath, our placement preceptor for all her guidance and continuous support.
- ❖ Katherine Rankin and the Haldimand Abilities Centre staff for their continuous support and for connecting us with the Grandview Lodge and other learning opportunities.
- ❖ Janis Giftopolous for providing us with information to make our resources more accessible.

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Introduction

Cognition and Cognitive Impairment

Cognition is the process of thinking, including one's awareness, reasoning, judgment and ability to respond to information

(AHDEL, 2000, as cited in Gilmour, 2011).

Cognitive impairment refers to difficulties in thinking that affects an individual's ability to do everyday activities. Cognitive impairment may be caused by brain injury or dementia, including Alzheimer's disease. In 2011, a total of 747,000 Canadians lived with some form of cognitive impairment, including dementia. This number is expected to double by the year 2031 (Alzheimer's Society of Ontario, 2012). The frequency of cognitive impairment may increase with advancing age (Ritchie & Tuokko, 2010).



Why use Montessori with individuals who have a cognitive impairment?

With the continuous increase in cognitive impairment, there is a crucial need for resources to help improve the quality of life of those affected and decrease the decline in their ability to do everyday activities (Daly, 2012). The Montessori Method, originally developed for children by Maria Montessori, integrates the principles of rehabilitation into education (Camp, 2001). The literature of Montessori with older adults with dementia has shown to increase

engagement in activity and positive affect/mood (Malone & Camp, 2007; Mehendra et al., 2006; Skrajner & Camp, 2007). With increases in engagement, the residents' behaviours decrease because they are attending to the activity and not consumed with a behaviour (Malone & Camp, 2007). However, the research is limited, as Montessori strategies applied to older adults with dementia is a relatively new intervention (Camp, 2001). There is a need for more research in this area, as Montessori is beginning to become a more popular intervention.

Who can use Montessori?

This guidebook is intended for care providers of individuals with a cognitive impairment, who play an important role in enhancing the quality of life of the individuals they care for. It was created as a resource tool to help care providers apply Montessori principles during the daily activities of eating and dressing to increase the individual's participation within these activities. As you apply the Montessori principles into your provided care, you may find that certain approaches can be time-consuming. We encourage you to invest your time and to always keep the purpose of Montessori at the forefront of your care- to increase the quality of life of your care recipients. The more time you invest in providing care, the bigger the contribution you make to the well-being of your care recipient.

"Help those who are in search of activity and cannot find it."

-Maria Montessori

Montessori Principles (Adapted from Elliot, 2011)

- ❖ The individual's independence is fostered through the use of consistent roles and routines
- ❖ Promoting the freedom of choice to increase the individual's self-esteem and independence
- ❖ The environment is matched with the individual's needs. The materials used are easily identifiable, important to the individual and visible. The environment is clutter-free.
- ❖ The activities and the materials used are in good condition, meaningful and familiar to the individual. The materials used are not broken or worn-out.
- ❖ The activities are shown, one-step at a time to help the individual to understand and to repeat the step.
- ❖ The activities and the environment progress from simple steps to more complex steps to allow easier learning. The presentation of the activity and the environmental set-up are matched with the individual's needs, interests and abilities.
- ❖ Use the individual's procedural memory, which is the memory you use when you are doing

something automatically, without thinking about it. As an example, when you walk the same way to work everyday, you do not have to stop and think about the way you are going.

- ❖ When you are asking an individual to remember a fact or an event, use cues in the environment to help him/her remember. As an example, when asking an individual what food he/she would like to eat, present choices of food through a picture or actual food on a plate.

"He must become independent of will, by using in freedom his own power of choice."

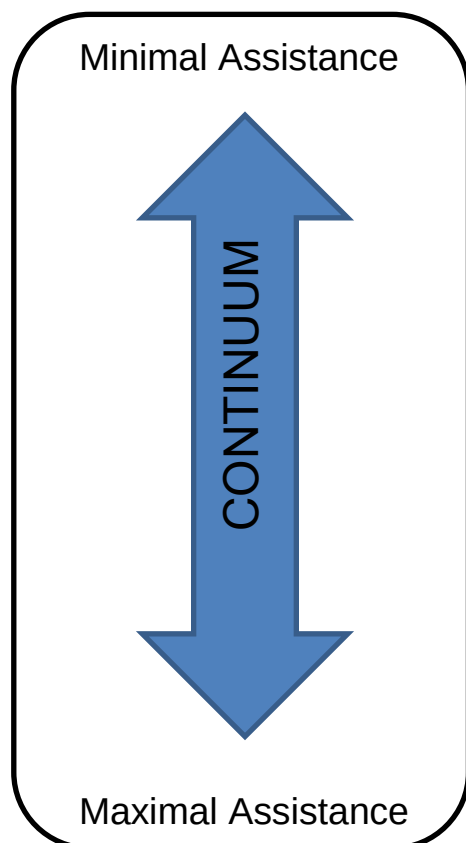
- Maria Montessori

- ❖ The activities should always promote success. The individual can discover an error he/she made on his/her own. Do not correct an individual's error, but praise him/her for trying to do the task.

Continuum of Assistance

To help determine the amount of support to provide an individual, it is important to understand the individual's current needs and abilities.

Directions: Use the continuum below to adapt a task for an individual. When adapting a task, it is important to start from simple to complex depending on the individual's needs and abilities. As the individual improves, offer less assistance. If the individual declines, offer more assistance.



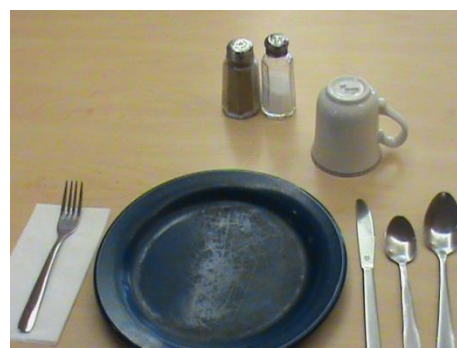
- The individual is independent with the task
- The individual is able to complete the task with the environment set-up for him/her
- The individual is able to complete the task with supervision and/or encouragement to remain focused
- The individual is able to complete the task with step-by-step verbal and/or visual instructions and/or physical touch to stay focused
- The individual is able to complete the task with hand-over-hand guided maneuvering of the limbs
- The individual is able to complete the task with physical assistance in maneuvering of the limbs
- The individual is dependent on caregiver to complete the task for him/her

What does this mean??

Independent: The individual is able to complete the task on his/her own with no assistance

Set up the environment: Setting up the environment to increase the individual's success in the activity.

- e.g. clearing the table and setting up the place for a meal with only dishes that are needed.



Grace, would you please open the drawer?

Verbal Instruction: Provision of words to describe the body movement and materials involved in the task

- e.g. "Would you please pick up your spoon?"

Visual Instruction: Provision of pictures/ signage or hand gestures to direct the individual's attention to the task, including body movements and materials involved

- e.g. Placing a picture/label of a toilet posted on the washroom door to indicate location of washroom or holding up a red shirt and a green shirt when asking an individual to choose one.

Physical Touch: Provision of touch to cue the individual to initiate a movement.

- e.g. At the dinner table, tap the individual's right arm to get his/her attention to pick up the spoon.

Hand-over-hand: Placing your hand/s over the individual's hand/s to guide the individual to complete the task. The individual is the one holding the tools (e.g. shirt or spoon) and completing the task. As the individual's ability to do small parts of the task increases, the hand-over-hand grip can be lessened.

- e.g. Placing your hand over the individual's hand as she picks up a fork and spears a piece of fish..

Physical assistance: Assist the individual by bearing physical weight of the limb.

- e.g. Lifting individual's arm while holding the shirt open when dressing.

Dependent: Individual is unable to complete the task, despite provision of assistance and needs the task to be completed for them.



Eating Guidelines

Directions: For each question on the left-hand side, answer “YES” or “NO” to determine the amount of support you would need to provide the individual. Progress through the steps in the right until the amount of support matches the individual’s ability to complete the activity. Score the individual’s ability to complete the activity based on the amount of assistance you provide for each question. The lower the score, the more independent the individual is in the activity, and vice versa. Add up all the scores to determine the Total Assistance Score out of 75.

Questions:

- ___ 1. Does the individual remember the time and place for meals?
- ___ 2. Can the individual establish a ready position for eating (Please refer to right side of the page for the definition of a ready position)?
- ___ 3. Can the individual identify the food items on his/her plate?
- ___ 4. Can the individual reach/grasp the dishes on the table?
- ___ 5. Can the individual grasp the utensils?
- ___ 6. Can the individual cut food items into manageable pieces?
- ___ 7. Can the individual grasp finger foods with his/her hands?
- ___ 8. Can the individual scoop/spear food items with utensils?
- ___ 9. Can the individual put food to his/her mouth?
- ___ 10. Can the individual reach/grasp dishes on the table? **If answers listed on the right side do not work, try moving the dishes closer to the individual and/or using built-up utensils.
- ___ 11. Can the individual chew and/or swallow thoroughly, at the appropriate time and pace?
** If answers on the right side do not work, try counting to pace the individual to chew and/or swallow appropriately, such as ‘1-2-3, swallow’ or adapting the task through the use of a straw for fluids.
- ___ 12. Can the individual return dishes to the table?
- ___ 13. Can the individual pick up a serviette and use it to wipe his/her mouth?
- ___ 14. Can the individual stay focused when eating?
- ___ 15. Does the individual finish his/her meal within a reasonable time?

Total Assistance Score: /75

Eating Ready Position: Seated comfortably and straight, with the back against the chair, feet flat on the floor and arms placed on the dining table.

Answer and (Scoring):

YES → (0) Provide praise and encouragement to the individual to continue doing this task

NO →

- (1) Set-up the environment to increase the individual’s success in the activity
- (2) If the individual cannot do the task with the environment set-up, verbally and/or visually instruct and/or physically touch the individual
- (3) If the individual cannot do the task with verbal and/or visual instruction, provide hand-over-hand guided maneuvering of limbs to complete the task
- (4) If the individual cannot do the task with hand-over-hand guided maneuvering of limbs, provide physical assistance in maneuvering of limbs to complete the task
- (5) If the individual cannot do the task with physical assistance in maneuvering of limbs, complete the task for the individual

Montessori Principles Applied to Eating

Q: How can I increase the individual's independence in eating?

- ❖ First, observe the individual to know and understand how much he/she can do on his/her own. Refer to 'Eating Guidelines' on page 5 for a tool to help you know what to observe.
- ❖ Keep the same schedule for eating, such as breakfast at 8:30 am; lunch at 12 noon and supper at 5 pm everyday.
- ❖ Help the individual eat in the same order every meal. (e.g. first take a sip of juice then bite the piece of toast). This will help the individual learn the steps in eating.
- ❖ Social roles can be offered to individuals, based on their abilities and interests, such as helping with the dining table set-up or washing the dishes after eating. When assigning an individual to set-up the table, use a template to help the individual know where to place utensils, the cups, plates and bowls on the table. Refer to pages 17-18 for a sample template and for some examples of social roles related to eating.

Q: How can I encourage an individual to make choices during eating?

- ❖ If the individual is able to make decisions, allow him/her to choose what to eat.
- ❖ Keep choices simple and do not over talk.



- ❖ If the individual is not eating, consider offering him/her a different choice of food.
- ❖ Use "would you?" instead of "could you", as "would" offers a choice to complete a task. (e.g. Would you please pick up your spoon?)

Q: How can the environment be set-up to increase eating participation?

- ❖ Post signage to inform the individual of the mealtime schedule. Refer to 'Signage Readability Guidelines' on page 20.
- ❖ Make the dining area easily recognizable for the individual by displaying pictures of food or food-related items. Displaying family pictures, or flower arrangements at the centre of the table also promotes the sense of "home" and the invitation to eat.
- ❖ Foods that are familiar to the individual and match with his/her dietary needs should be served.

- ❖ Consider playing music that is familiar to the individual before eating to help him/her learn that a song indicates it is time to eat (Lin et al., 2010).
- ❖ If the individual's vision has deteriorated, use a placemat colour that is different from the colour of dishes, so that the dishes stand out. This way the dishes will not blend into the background. The same strategy can be used for the food colour against the colour of the dishes. (e.g. broccoli on a white plate).
- ❖ Remove clutter in the dining area to decrease distraction.
- ❖ Ensure dining room is well-lit.

"The environment must be rich in motives which lead interest to activity and invite the [individual] to conduct his own experiences."

-Maria Montessori

Q: How do I begin eating with the individual?

- ❖ Prepare the individual for eating. Begin by getting the individual's attention by calling out his/her name and/ or touching the individual's hand. Then orient the individual to the task by asking, "Would you like to start eating?"
- ❖ Ensure the individual is close to the table; sitting appropriately, with his/her back against the chair, feet planted on the floor or wheelchair foot rests and food

placed in front of the individual within reach.

- ❖ Encourage the individual to be in the ready position for eating through the use of one-step verbal or visual instructions, such as placing the hand on the table to prepare oneself to pick up a spoon.
- ❖ Instruct eating through the use of clear, one-step verbal instructions to allow easier learning (e.g. "please put the fork in your mouth"; upon completion, one can then say: "please take a bite" or "please take the fork out of your mouth", and then "please chew your food slowly").
- ❖ Give praise and encouragement to the individual throughout eating for trying to eat or being able to do each step of the task (e.g. "You did a great job of picking up your spoon").

Q: How can I adjust the amount of support I provide to an individual?

- ❖ Use the 'Eating Guidelines' on page 5 to help determine the abilities of the individual. You may need to use trial and error to figure out the amount of support that will work best with the individual. It is important to note that there is no one, correct approach with an individual that will always work. The key is to be patient and to be open-minded to try various approaches.
- ❖ The individual's abilities may change over time. Use the 'Continuum of Assistance' on page 3 to help you know how to

adjust the amount of support you need to provide the individual. As the individual improves, offer less assistance. If the individual declines, offer more assistance. (e.g. if the individual is unable to pick up a spoon with verbal or visual instructions, try using hand-over-hand guided maneuvering of limbs. If the individual begins to have the ability to do this task again, use only verbal or visual instructions).



Q: How can I make eating easier for the individual?

- ❖ When assisting an individual with eating, focus on procedural memory, which is the memory you use when you are doing something automatically, without thinking about it. As an example, a common procedure of eating is to pick up a spoon and to place it on one's mouth. Helping the individual to pick up the spoon and placing it on the tip of his/her mouth improves his/her automatic memory to put the

spoon in his/her mouth and to chew.

- ❖ When you are asking an individual to remember a fact or an event, use cues in the environment to help him/her remember. As an example, when an individual needs to remember what time lunch occurs, one can direct the individual's attention to the signage displayed on the dining area wall that indicates mealtimes.
- ❖ Avoid asking questions that require an individual to use memory for facts, such as "What is my name?" since the individual may not remember the answer.
- ❖ Pairing verbal instructions with visual instructions and/or physical touch may make it easier for the individual to follow the instructions (e.g. Show an individual a clock and verbally read the time out loud).
- ❖ Encourage repetition of tasks within eating, as more repetition improves learning and ability to do these tasks.

Q: How can I make eating successful for the individual?

- ❖ It is important to focus on the process of eating, as opposed to the "right" or "wrong" ways of eating. Do not correct an individual's error, but praise him/her for trying to do the task.
- ❖ Allow the individual to discover an error he/she made on his/her own by providing guidance (e.g. "Is this where you want to put your serviette? Would it be easier for you to reach if we placed the serviette on your lap instead?").

Case Example

Applying Montessori to Increase Eating Participation

Let's Meet Ellie!



- ❖ Ellie lives in a dementia care unit at a long-term care home. She cannot eat on her own and the staff at the home believe that she has the potential to increase her participation in this activity.
- ❖ The staff were using varied approaches to help Ellie eat. Some encouraged her to feed herself while others provided total assistance to feed her.
- ❖ A student occupational therapist (SOT) worked with Ellie to assess her abilities in eating and to establish a consistent eating routine for the staff to follow with Ellie.

Ellie's Strengths

- ❖ The SOT observed Ellie and found that she was able to verbally respond to questions and follow one-step instructions, such as: "Ellie, would you please pick up your spoon?"
- ❖ Ellie was motivated to eat on her own.
- ❖ Ellie uses a wheelchair and she is physically able to eat. She was able to maintain her stable sitting

position for an hour. She also had the strength to lift her utensils.

Ellie's Challenges

- ❖ She required additional support from staff to help stabilize her dishes and to prevent food spillage.
- ❖ Ellie was able to focus on eating for five-minute periods, but would look down, place her hands on her lap and close her eyes after this time frame.
- ❖ Ellie experienced fatigue and has arthritis in both of her hands that caused a lot of pain when eating.

Eating Guidelines

- ❖ The SOT used the 'Eating Guidelines' on page 5 to increase Ellie's participation in eating.
- ❖ Step 1: The SOT made sure that Ellie's hands were placed on the table, ready for eating. She was able to establish this hand position without any instruction.
- ❖ Step 2: Using Ellie's strength of being able to follow one-step verbal instructions, the SOT provided her with verbal instruction paired with visual instruction after every spoonful, such as: "Ellie, would you please pick up your spoon", and pointing to her spoon.
- ❖ Ellie was successfully able to eat her soup for approximately fifteen minutes with verbal and visual instructions.

- ❖ The SOT provided Ellie with praise and encouragement for this ability.
- ❖ After fifteen minutes however, Ellie started to become unresponsive to the verbal and visual instructions. She would no longer look up nor attempt to pick up her utensil. Ellie said she was tired and her hands were in pain.
- ❖ Step 3: The SOT provided her with hand-over-hand assistance, where the SOT instructed her and placed her hand over Ellie's to guide Ellie in picking up her spoon. Ellie was still the one holding her spoon.



- ❖ The SOT continued to provide hand-over-hand assistance for the next fifteen minutes. However, as Ellie's fatigue and hand pain increased, she became resistant to the hand-over-hand assistance provided.
- ❖ Step 4: The SOT then progressed to providing Ellie with physical assistance, where the



- SOT held the physical weight of Ellie's arm and the spoon.
- ❖ Ellie was able to continue eating with physical assistance for approximately five minutes.
- ❖ As eating progressed, Ellie's fatigue increased and she was no longer responding to any type of assistance.
- ❖ Step 5: Ellie was provided with a ten-minute break.
- ❖ After her break, Ellie regained some energy and was able to respond to the verbal and visual instructions again.

Next Steps

- ❖ The SOT recommended to the staff that they provide Ellie with 10-minute breaks, every 15 minutes when eating to allow her to re-energize.
- ❖ The SOT recommended that the staff continuously assess Ellie's changing needs and abilities since she may need more assistance as the eating activity progresses, due to her fatigue and hand pain.
- ❖ The SOT also encouraged the staff to be open-minded to modify the amount of assistance that they provide to Ellie, based on her changing needs. Modifying the amount of assistance may include providing verbal and visual instructions or physical assistance.
- ❖ The SOT encouraged the staff to provide Ellie with a lot of praise and encouragement to motivate her with eating.
- ❖ The SOT made a recommendation to staff to purchase a Dycem non-slip mat to help Ellie stabilize her dishes.

Dressing Guidelines

Directions: For each question on the left-hand side, answer “YES” or “NO” to determine the amount of support you need to provide the individual. Progress through the steps on the right until the amount of support matches the individual’s ability to complete the activity. Score the individual’s ability to complete the activity based on the amount of assistance you provide for each question. The lower the score, the more independent the individual is in the activity, and vice versa. Add up all the scores to determine the Total Assistance Score out of 70.

Questions:

- ___ 1. Does the individual identify the need to change clothing?
- ___ 2. Can the individual locate where clothing is stored?
- ___ 3. Can the individual open the drawer/closet to retrieve clothing?
- ___ 4. Can the individual choose all articles of clothing appropriate for the day (including undergarments, shirt, pants, socks and shoes)?
- ___ 5. Can the individual obtain clothing from their drawer/closet and take the clothing to the dressing area?
- ___ 6. Can the individual remove dirty clothes?
- ___ 7. Can the individual identify the order of putting on clothing items?
- ___ 8. Can the individual identify the front and back of clothing?
- ___ 9. Can the individual identify appropriate placement of their arm/ leg into clothing?
- ___ 10. Can the individual put on undergarments, a shirt or pants?
- ___ 11. Can the individual button, zip and/or snap clothing?
- ___ 12. Can the individual put on a belt and/or suspenders?
- ___ 13. Can the individual put on socks/ stockings?
- ___ 14. Can the individual put on and fasten shoes?

Answer and (Scoring):

YES → (0) Provide praise and encouragement to the individual to continue doing this task

NO →

- (1) Set-up the environment to increase the individual’s success in the activity
- (2) If the individual cannot do the task with the environment set-up, verbally and/or visually instruct and/or physically touch the individual
- (3) If the individual cannot do the task with verbal and/or visual instructions, provide hand-over-hand guided maneuvering of limbs to complete the task
- (4) If the individual cannot do the task with hand-over-hand guided maneuvering of limbs, provide physical assistance in maneuvering of limbs to complete the task
- (5) If the individual cannot do the task with physical assistance in maneuvering of limbs, complete the task for the individual

Total Assistance Score: /70

(CMS, 2013)

Montessori Principles Applied to Dressing

Q: How can I increase the individual's independence in dressing?

- ❖ First observe the individual to know and understand how much he/she can do on his/her own. Refer to "Dressing Guidelines" on page 11 for a tool to help you know what to observe.
- ❖ Keep the same schedule for dressing everyday (e.g. individual gets dressed every morning at 7am).
- ❖ Help the individual dress in the same order everyday (e.g. first put on underwear, second put on pants). This will help the individual learn the steps in getting dressed.
- ❖ Social roles can be offered to individuals, based on their abilities and interests, such as helping fold the clothes from the laundry, or putting the laundry away. Refer to page 17 for some examples of social roles related to dressing.

Q: How can I encourage an individual to make choices during dressing?

- ❖ If the individual can make a decision, encourage the individual to make the choice of what he/she would like to wear.
- ❖ Keep choices simple, do not over talk.

- ❖ If the individual does not want to get dressed, consider offering them a different outfit.
- ❖ Use "would you" instead of "could you", as "would" offers a choice to complete a task (e.g. Would you please put on your sock?).



Q: How can the environment be set up to increase dressing participation?

- ❖ Separate clothing into categories (e.g. pants hang on the left and shirts hang on the right)
- ❖ Use signage on the closet/drawers to indicate the location of the individual's clothes. Use realistic pictures of clothes instead of cartoons. Using pictures of individual's own clothes is helpful as it can be more recognizable to the individual.
- ❖ Ensure the images and labels are large enough for the individual to

read. Refer to 'Signage Readability Guidelines' on page 20.



- ❖ Remove clutter to decrease distraction.
- ❖ If the individual's vision has deteriorated, use a background colour that is different from the clothing colour, so the clothing stands out. This way the clothing will not blend into the background.
- ❖ Ensure dressing area is well-lit.

Q: How do I begin dressing with the individual?

- ❖ Prepare the individual for dressing. Begin by getting the individual's attention by calling out his/her name and/or touching the individual's hand. Then orient the individual to the task by asking, "Would you like to get dressed for the day?"
- ❖ Ensure that there is an area properly set up for the individual to get dressed. Dressing should

always occur in the same area.

This area should have a comfortable place for the individual to sit and any special supports the individual may need (e.g. Grab bars for balance).

- ❖ Instruct dressing one step at a time. This can be outlined in a visual schedule of dressing posted in the bedroom or with verbal one-step, clear instructions (eg. "would you put on your shirt?", then "would you do up the buttons?").
- ❖ Give praise and encouragement to the individual throughout dressing for trying to dress or being able to do each step of the task (e.g. "You did a great job at putting on your sock").

Q: How can I adjust the amount of support I provide to an individual?

- ❖ Use the 'Dressing Guidelines' on page 11 to help determine the abilities of the individual. You may need to use trial and error to figure out what amount of support will work best with the individual. It is important to note that there is no one, correct approach that will always work. The key is to be patient with the individual and to be open-minded to trying various approaches.
- ❖ The individual's abilities may change over time. Use the 'Continuum of Assistance' on page 3 to help you know how to adjust the amount of support you

need to provide the individual. As the individual improves, offer less assistance. If the individual declines, offer more assistance (e.g. If the individual is unable to put on socks with verbal or visual instructions, try using hand-over-hand guiding of limbs. If the individual begins to be able to put on socks once again, use only verbal or visual instructions).

Q: How can I make dressing easier for the individual?

- ❖ When assisting an individual with dressing, focus on using procedural memory, which is memory you use when you are doing something automatically, without thinking about it. For example, ask the individual to button up his/her shirt and instruct the individual to the buttons. Once the individual begins buttoning, the individual should be able to finish as he/she is using his/her unconscious memory.
- ❖ When you are asking an individual to remember a fact or an event, use cues in the environment to help him/her to remember (e.g. When an individual needs to remember where clothes are kept, you can verbally instruct the individual's attention to signage on the closet

to indicate where clothes are kept).

- ❖ Avoid asking questions that require an individual to use his/her memory for facts, such as "What is my name?" since the individual may not remember the answer.
- ❖ Pairing verbal instructions with visual instructions and/or physical touch may make it easier for the individual to follow the instructions (e.g. show an individual a clock and verbally read the time out loud).
- ❖ Encourage repetition of tasks within dressing, as more repetition improves learning and ability to do these tasks.

Q: How can I make dressing successful for the individual?

- ❖ It is important to focus on the process of dressing, as opposed to the "right" or "wrong" ways of dressing. Do not correct an individual's error, but praise him/her for trying to do the task.
- ❖ Allow the individual to discover an error he/she made on his/her own by providing guidance (e.g. "Is that how you would like your buttons done up?").

"If the object meets the inner needs of the [individual] and is something that will satisfy [him/her], it rouses the [individual] to prolonged activity. He masters it and uses it over and over again."

-Maria Montessori

Case Example

Applying Montessori to Increase Dressing Participation

Let's Meet Grace



- ❖ Grace lives in a dementia care unit at a long-term care home. She cannot get dressed on her own and the staff at the home believe she could increase her participation in this activity.
- ❖ The staff were using various approaches to help Grace get dressed. Some were allowing her to choose her outfit and dress on her own, only using verbal instruction to encourage her. Others were choosing her outfit for her and not giving her the option to choose what she would like to wear.
- ❖ A student occupational therapist (SOT) worked with Grace to assess her abilities in dressing and to establish a consistent dressing routine for the staff to follow with Grace.

Grace's Strengths

- ❖ The SOT observed Grace and found that she was able to verbally respond to questions and follow one-step instructions.
- ❖ Grace was motivated to dress on her own and choose her outfit for

the day. She has the physical ability to dress and is able to read.

Grace's Challenges

- ❖ Grace's difficulty in sustaining her attention and staying focused are major barriers to getting dressed.

Dressing Guidelines

- ❖ The SOT used the 'Dressing Guidelines' on page 11 to increase Grace's participation in dressing.
- ❖ Step 1: The environment was set-up to increase Grace's success in the activity. Using Grace's strength of her ability to read, signage with one-step instructions and real-life pictures were placed in her closet and drawers, as seen in the pictures below. Note: the language chosen for the signage was tailored to Grace (e.g. Grace calls her sweater a "jersey").





- ❖ The signage follows the 'Signage Readability Guidelines' on page 20 to make it easily readable.
- ❖ Step 2: The SOT verbally instructed Grace using one-step instructions to the activity by asking, "Grace, would you like to get dressed?"
- ❖ The SOT provided verbal and visual instructions to direct Grace to the closet to begin her dressing by choosing an outfit.
- ❖ Grace was able to read the signage and understand what the signage was telling her to do. The SOT provided Grace with praise and encouragement for this ability.
- ❖ Step 3: Grace was not able to initiate the task using the visual instructions on the signage. The SOT paired the visual instruction with verbal instruction. Grace was able to follow the paired instructions and to successfully pick out her outfit. The verbal instructions are shown in the following pictures.
- ❖ In a second session, Grace did not require as much verbal instruction from the SOT and had increased her dressing participation.

Next Steps

- ❖ Continuous Assessment of Grace's changing needs. She may need less verbal assistance as she learns to use the signage.
- ❖ Provide praise and encouragement throughout dressing.



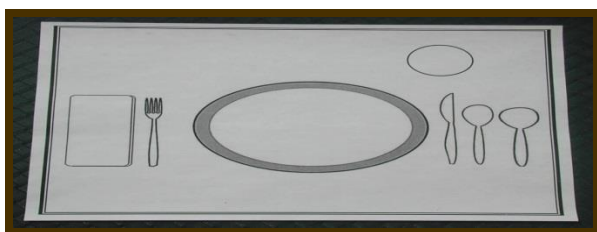
Social Roles and Leisure Activities for Eating and Dressing

It is important to include roles and leisure activities into the individual's life that supports the goal of increased participation in eating and dressing. The following is a list of ideas for roles and leisure activities related to eating and dressing to help motivate the individual to participate and be interested in self-eating and self-dressing.

Social Roles for Eating

Give the individual the choice if he/she would like to be in charge of the following roles:

- ❖ Setting-up the dining table. A template of the table set-up, as seen in the picture below, may guide the individual to determine where to place specific utensils and dishes.



(Camp, 2012)

- ❖ Putting the dishes in the sink for washing after every meal.
- ❖ Washing or drying the dishes.
- ❖ Placing the dishes back in the drawers and/or cupboards after washing.
- ❖ Assisting with meal preparation. This can include cutting or mixing ingredients.

Leisure Activities for Eating

The following activities can be completed with the individual:

- ❖ Making a grocery list before grocery shopping. The individual can look inside the refrigerator and be provided with some assistance using questions to help him/her determine items that need to be purchased, such as "Do you need more eggs?"
- ❖ Baking a simple dessert or a favorite recipe for a special occasion. This can include mixing ingredients, cutting dough, or decorating.
- ❖ Going grocery shopping. The individual can look for the grocery items on a list or place the grocery items on the checkout counter or place the grocery items in the bags.
- ❖ Putting groceries away. The individual can remove the grocery items from the bags or place the items in their appropriate storage areas.
- ❖ Making up cross words or word searches using food or eating-related words can help the individual be more familiar with various foods and eating-related items.

- ❖ Making a food poster that can be displayed on the dining area wall. The individual can cut food-related pictures from magazines and paste them on a large piece of paper.



(Eclectic Whimsy, 2012)

Social Roles for Dressing

Give the individual the choice if he/she would like to be in charge of the following roles:

- ❖ Doing or helping with the laundry. This can include washing, drying, and folding the clothes. It may also include carrying the laundry to the laundry room and/or back to the closet to put the clothing away.
- ❖ Sorting the laundry or clothing.
- ❖ Choosing or helping to choose his/her own outfit for the day.
- ❖ If the individual is elderly and has young grandchildren, the individual can help his/her grandchild pick out an outfit and get dressed. This can help the individual remember how to get dressed himself/herself and reinforce the dressing process. If the individual is younger, he/she can help his/her siblings or parents choose their outfit.

Leisure Activities for Dressing

The following activities can be completed with the individual:

- ❖ Looking through catalogues and magazines to pick out an outfit for an occasion. This can be an outfit for a family member or a friend or for the individual himself/herself. It can be for a special occasion like a party, a job interview or just for everyday wear. When the individual picks out the clothing, you can ask him/her to cut it out to make a collage, or write down the items in a shopping list so the clothing can be tried on at the store. To make this activity easier, give the individual cards with clothing items on them and ask him/her to make an outfit from the choices on the cards.



(Joe Fresh, 2012)

- ❖ Taking the individual shopping for new clothes for himself/herself or for a family member or friend.
- ❖ Dressing frames can be a way to incorporate dressing into a leisure activity at home. Dressing frames

are material stretched over frames that have zippers, snaps, laces and buttons. Dressing frames allow the individual to practice doing up fasteners and other tasks related to dressing. Refer to picture below.



(Constructive Play Things, 2012)

- ❖ Stories about helping a child to get dressed or choosing an outfit can be used during a book reading time.
- ❖ Make cards of clothing (e.g. shirts and pants) then give them to the individual to sort into categories.
- ❖ Make cards of an outfit and have the individual indicate the order the clothing should be put on.
- ❖ Making up cross words or word searches using clothing words can help the individual be familiar with the names of the clothing.

Signage Readability Guidelines (Adapted from the Canadian National Institute for the Blind Clear Print Accessibility Guidelines, n.d.)

Readability should be the first priority when making your information accessible to everyone. The following 'Signage Readability Guidelines' will help you design your information to access a wider audience.

Contrast:

- ❖ Make the text and background colours highly contrasting.

e.g. Black Text on a White Background **or White Text on a Dark Blue Background is easier to read** versus
 Green text on a white background is harder to read.

Text Colour

- ❖ For easier readability, make the text colour black and white.
- ❖ Coloured text should be limited to titles, headlines or highlighted information.

Text Size

- ❖ The bigger the text, the better.
- ❖ Make your text large, between 12 and 18 point text. However, take note that size changes between different types of fonts.
- ❖ When choosing a text size, always keep in mind who your readers are.

e.g. bigger text is easier to read versus smaller text is harder to read

Line Spacing

- ❖ The line spacing should be a minimum of 25%-30% of the text size to allow readers to navigate more easily to the next text line.
- ❖ Heavier types of text will need more line spacing.

e.g. A 12-point size text will require a line spacing of at least 3.6 points (as above) versus these lines which are too close together

Text Font

- ❖ Do not use decorative texts.
- ❖ Use standard texts with easy-to-read upper and lower-case characters.
- ❖ Arial and Verdana are highly recommended.

e.g. this font is easier to read versus *this font is harder to read*

Text Thickness

- ❖ Choose moderately- thick text types. Do not use thin text types.
- ❖ Use bold or heavy font when stressing a word instead of using italics or upper-case letters.

e.g. **this text thickness is easier to read** versus this text thickness is harder to read

Letter Spacing

- ❖ Ensure that there is a wide space between the letters.
e.g. a wide space between letters is easier to read versus
a narrow space between letters is harder to read

Columns

- ❖ Text in columns involves less eye movement and less peripheral vision to read. Therefore, separating your text into columns is highly recommended.

Paper Finish

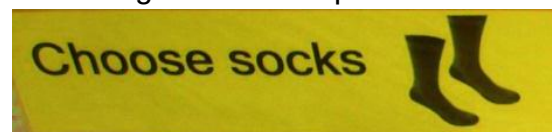
- ❖ To minimize glare, use a matte or non-glossy paper finish.

- ❖ To minimize distractions, ensure you do not use complicated backgrounds.

Design Simplicity and Cleanliness

- ❖ Keep signage basic with only the necessary information. Do not clutter signage with multiple pictures and designs that may be distracting.

e.g. refer to the picture below



Montessori Take Home Points

- ❖ Caregivers have the important role as facilitators of an activity (J. O'Neill, Personal Communication, November 20, 2012). As facilitators, it is essential to adapt an activity based on individual's level of functioning.
- ❖ It is important to encourage the individual to have an active role in his/her daily activities (Montessori, 1914, as cited in Elliot, 2011).
- ❖ There is no one approach that will always work with an individual. The key is to be patient and to be open-minded to try various strategies. We encourage you to invest your time and to always keep the purpose of Montessori at the forefront of your care- to increase the quality of life of your care recipients. The more time you invest in providing care, the bigger the contribution you make to the well-being of your care recipient (J. O'Neill, Personal Communication, November 20, 2012).
- ❖ Provide the individual with choices and set-up the environment to increase his/her success in the activity.
- ❖ The more you do an activity, the better you get at it (Montessori, 1914, as cited in Elliot, 2011). Consistency in approach and practice are essential for easier learning.
- ❖ "There are no errors. Just different ways of doing tasks" (Montessori, 1914, as cited in Elliot, 2011).

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